

The Link

January 2008



The Official Journal of the Buffalo Amateur Radio Repeater Association, Inc.

This Month's Program: Annual Report of the Technical Committee to the Membership

Every January the BARRA Technical Committee presents a year-in-review to the membership on all of their activities over the previous year, and this month is no exception. Repeater trustees and project heads are expected to have photos and presentations about their respective work.

This year there will be an overall report of the rehabilitation of our "other" building at the Cole Road site, known as "Chet's Shack." We have documented the progress in these pages over the past few years, but it will be impressive to see photos of the project from beginning to end in one sitting. The exterior work on Chet's Shack was very nearly completed this year, with only some minor finishing work left when the winter weather drove us all indoors.

The Technical Committee report is always a don't miss event. It is even more so if you can't get out to a repeater site, you'll have the opportunity to "visit" nearly all the BARRA repeaters in one evening, without having to leave your chair!

Plan on spending the evening with us on Monday, January 21st. See you there.

Best Wishes, Bruce!

It has come to our attention that Bruce Barrows, WA2HVE, is spending some time at the Cleveland Clinic undergoing some tests. We would all like to send Bruce a "Good Luck" and "Hope to See You Back Soon."

BARRA Web Site

It was brought to your editor's attention the other day that perhaps not every member is aware of the club web site. BARRA has had a presence on the Internet since July 1996 -- almost 12 years! -- and the URL is always listed on Page 2 with other important club information.

Surfing to <http://barra.hamgate.net> will land you at the club's web site where you can find upcoming meeting and event announcements, back issues of the *Link* newsletter (check out the one on purple "ditto" from 1968!), as well as photos of some events from the recent past. There is also a link to a membership application that you can print out and give to a friend, and encourage them to join BARRA!

Misplaced your current *Link*? You can always find BARRA information on the web site.

It's Almost Time for the Auction!

The holidays are behind us and the Technical Committee report is coming, so that must mean that the Annual BARRA Auction is not far away! Monday, February 18th is the date, save it now on your calendar!

Easily BARRA's most popular event of the year, the Auction is our indoor hamfest of sorts where your electronic items are auctioned to the highest bidder. BARRA retains 10% of the selling price of all items as a fundraiser to help pay for our meeting space at the church.

You have about a month yet, so start digging out those neglected electronic goodies to bring to the Auction, and maybe bring a smile to the XYL's face to get rid of some of "that stuff." Remember also that your auction lot can be donated to the club, to further help the group. While we recognize that not everyone is in a position to do that, it is an option that is welcomed whenever possible.

Do You Goodsearch for BARRA?



Back in late October BARRA signed up with the online search engine Goodsearch, a web site that will earn BARRA money just by your Internet searches. To help BARRA earn money, simply go to <http://www.goodsearch.com/?charityid=856247> and it will remember you on future visits -- BARRA will receive credit, about a penny a search, for each Internet search you perform through this site. We have been publicizing this on the BARRA email lists and we made around \$30.00 by the end of December. You can click any time on the "Amount Raised" button to see how we're doing.

In addition, many online retailers participate with Goodsearch and send a percentage of any purchases you make to our Goodsearch account. The amount varies by vendor, and ranges from 0.5% to around 4%. To make sure your purchases are credited to BARRA, you must go to the online vendor by starting at the Goodsearch site and clicking on the "Who do you Goodshop for" box and selecting the retailer from there. Most of the major online establishments are represented like Amazon, Shutterfly and eBay as well as many brick-n-mortar outfits like Sears and Target. However, you must access those retailers' sites through Goodsearch so the credit gets back to BARRA.

Also, please feel free to spread the word and have your non-BARRA friends and family help out since anyone can Goodsearch for BARRA!

Buffalo Amateur Radio Repeater Association, Inc.

Club Officers & Directors

President	Nelson Oldfield WA2ZSJ '09	634-6394
Vice President	Doug Alderdice KA2WFT '09	834-2664
Secretary	Greg Miller K2GTM '08	565-1807
Treasurer	Ed Swan W2EAS '10	836-0417
Director	Dave Halik W2ZZA '08	824-3432

Committees & Chairs

Technical	Ted Ertl WA2HKS
Link Editor	Doug Alderdice KA2WFT
Associate Link Editor	Dave Sewhuk N2GH
WNYSORC Representative Chair	Ben Bass N2YDM
Membership,	
Roster & Passwords	KA2WFT, W2EAS
Activities List	Ed Swan W2EAS
ID Badges	W2EAS
Erie County Emer. Coord.	Vince Harzewski N2JRS
Erie County RACES Officer	Gene Kremzier N2OBW

Voice Repeaters

K2GTM	PL 107.2	29.68-	Boston
K2ISO		145.17-	Wethersfield
K2ILH	PL 107.2	146.73-	Niagara Falls
W2EUP		146.91-	Boston
N2YDM	PL 107.2	147.00+	Kenmore
W2EUP		224.82-	Boston
WR2AHL	PL 110.9	442.00+	Wethersfield
WA2HKS		444.00+	Buffalo
WB2DSS	PL 151.4	444.75+	Kenmore

APRS Digi-peater

K2ILH-2	144.39	Amherst
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BARRA Tech Net

Join the BARRA Technical crew on the 146.91/444.00 system Wednesdays at 8 PM for answers to your technical questions.

RAWNY Net

Stop by Monday evenings at 7:00 pm and join the RAWNY club's net which meets on our 146.91 and 444.00 repeaters.

BARRA on the Internet

<http://barra.hamgate.net>

Club Calls

BARRA holds club calls W2EUP and K2ISO in honor and memory of two of its founders, Gil Boelke, W2EUP, and Hugh Wilson, K2ISO.

CBS-Scanners-Ham-Marine-Business Radios-Radar Detectors

HIRSCH'S

WNY's Largest Communication Store Since 1961
219 California Drive - Williamsville, NY 14221

Hours-M,T,Th,F 10-5:30; Sat. 10-5:00; Closed Wed.

(716) 632-1189

Sales - Service - Installation

WA2OLW (Leprechaun Graphics, 675-3764) still has BARRA jackets and T-shirts available.

Don't Forget to Get Your BARRA Mug!



These great looking, sturdy, quality ceramic mugs sport the BARRA buffalo logo, are dishwasher safe, and let you show your club colors in style!

Only \$5.00 Each!

Available at all club meetings

The BARRA E-Mail List Serve

To join, send an e-mail message to:

majordomo@hamgate.net

with the message subscribe barra in the main body of the note.

To send a message to the list subscribers, address your e-mail to:

barra@hamgate.net

The Link is published eight times a year by BARRA, the Buffalo Amateur Radio Repeater Association, Inc. The opinions expressed herein, however, are not necessarily those of the Board of Directors or membership of BARRA. Letters to the editor are solicited and must be signed. Names and addresses will be withheld if requested. Material for *The Link* should be sent to the Editor:

Buffalo Amateur Radio Repeater Ass'n
P.O. Box 507
N. Tonawanda, NY 14120-0507

or may be submitted electronically to the editor's e-mail address: ka2wft@arrl.net. The editor may be reached by telephone in the evenings at (716) 834-2664.

DISTRIBUTION

The Link is available in both print and electronic formats. If you wish to receive *The Link* in the Adobe cross-platform PDF format by e-mail instead of regular mail, please notify the editor at ka2wft@arrl.net. Regular mail recipients are charged \$4 beyond their dues.

ARTICLES

Articles for the *Link* on any subject, technical or general interest, are always welcome and encouraged. When submitting material to the *Link*, please type it or submit it electronically, if possible. Remember that the editor reserves the right to make necessary changes including reformatting and condensing for space and that Full Membership may be obtained by writing articles.

LINK DEADLINES

All material must be submitted to the Editor by the end of the month previous to the issue (e.g. December 31st for the January issue). Of course, if the material is received earlier than that date, you will have a better chance of getting your article in the next issue. All advertising is subject to the same deadline.

ADVERTISING

Want-Ads are free to BARRA members and are published in the next available issue. Ads from other hams are accepted free on a space-available basis. Ads appearing in other club newsletters with which BARRA has an exchange agreement are reprinted on a space-available basis.

Display advertising is available at the prevailing rates. Business card size is currently \$2.50/mo; full page is \$20.00/mo. Contact the editor for rates for other sizes.

DUES

Basic membership rate: \$25.00

Family member in the same household as first member: \$3.00

Discounts from basic rate

Senior Citizen (65+): -5.00

Disabled: -5.00

Voting member: -5.00

Full-time student with ID: -5.00

Each new member recommended: -1.00

US Mail newsletter delivery: add \$4.00

Note: A voting member is a member who has performed a service for BARRA (e.g. helped out at an activity, written a *Link* article, etc.).



Hobby Highlights

Rich Sellers, KG2OR

According to K1ZZ, David Sumner, in *QST*, 12/07, pg. 9, W1AW has been issuing low sun spot numbers in the latter stages of Cycle 23. He expects sun spot activity to increase this year. Mr. Sumner describes experience on various bands. He suggests three things:



- (1) use an optimum antenna configuration
- (2) use digital modes as well as SSB
- (3) when you find null periods fluctuate your radio schedule between AM or PM.

While sun spot Cycle 24 is about to begin keep your eyes on K7RA, and his monthly essay at <http://www.arrl.org> called "Solar Update." At this site you can view sun spot and solar flux numbers, Planetary A index, and features about radio science. In my opinion it is worth reading.

You might want to look at my "Hobby Highlights" from September 2006. I wrote about sun spots, and some various websites and authors. Be certain; do not look at the sun with your naked eye, and let the solar telescopes do all the work!

73 de KG2OR, Richard Sellers.

Don't Forget to Check In With the BARRA



Wednesday Evenings at 8 PM

146.91/224.82/444.00

"Extra points for checking in on 220"

1.25 Meters, the Forgotten Band

Dave Halik, W2ZZA

Did you know there is a 1.25 meter ham band in North America? Yes, the 220 MHz band as it is most often called, or the forgotten VHF step child of ham bands. Lying between the very popular 2 meter band and the nearly equally popular 70 cm band, 1.25 meters has fallen victim to spectrum re-allocation, manufacturer neglect, and a general misunderstanding by hams.

The 1.25 meter band is without a doubt a bit of an "Odd Ball" band. Its name alone is a bit of a problem, "One point two five meters" is to say the least a mouthful. Perhaps that's why most hams refer to it as "220." What ever you call it the band it is often forgotten by most hams because most manufacturers have forgotten it, too. Let's face it, if you can't buy a rig for it, you're not likely to work the band. Gone are the days of Home Brewing -- but that's another story.

Major equipment manufacturers have for years overlooked monoband transceivers for 220 MHz and with a few exceptions have omitted 220 from multiband rigs. If you are looking to do SSB or CW on 220 MHz, good luck. This may in part be due to the fact that not all countries have allocated the band for amateur use.

In the early 1990s the FCC re-allocated 220-222 MHz to non-amateur use. Since then the FCC has re-allocated a portion of the band on a shared basis for data (packet) use by hams. Our friends to the north have had simpler ups and downs regarding this band. In 2006 Industry Canada returned 220-222 MHz to hams on a secondary basis.

With this turmoil of spectrum allocation it's no wonder manufacturers are reluctant to produce rigs for the 220 band. Of the major equipment manufactures only Alinco (if you call them major) has a 220 mobile transceiver in their line. Yes, there are handheld entrees from Icom, Kenwood, and Yeasu but no mobiles and as for multimode (FM, SSB, CW, and AM) forget it... To the best of my knowledge the Icom IC-375 was the last 220 all mode rig manufactured in 1987, and the last one seen on eBay sold for over \$1400.00, more than three times the price of the 2 meter or 70 CM units (Icom IC-275 and IC-475). Clearly there is a need for more equipment on this band. If eBay prices and number of bidders are any indicator, equipment manufacturers should pay attention. Hams seem to be willing to pay top dollar for 220 gear.

Antennas, diplexers, and triplexers for 220 also seem to be in demand and bring top dollar. Yet try to find more than one or two brands of 220 antennas or harder yet a multiband antenna that has 220 MHz coverage.

Band openings on 220 MHz happen about as often as those on 2 meters and offer the advantage of an un-crowded band with little background noise. Repeaters on 220 although fewer than those on 2 meters, offer similar coverage and performance. The W2EUP 224.820 MHz repeater provides good coverage into Toronto and does it with only six watts output! Simplex on 223.500 MHz is also active in the Western New York area.

So the next time you're at a hamfest or shopping on eBay don't forget the 220 MHz "One Point Two Five Meter" band and join in the fun.

Here are some one point two five meter band radios to look for:

Icom
 HTs IC-V21AT, IC-V03AT, IC-3AT, IC-3SAT,
 Mobiles IC-37A, IC-38A, IC-2330A (2M/220)
 Base IC-375A/H (10W/100W) ALL MODE
 Note: Icom offers 220 modules for some of its multi band mobiles.

Kenwood
 HTs TH-F6A (TRI-BAND)
 Mobiles TM-321A, TM-331A, TM631A (2M/220) TM-642 (2M/220)
 Note: Kenwood offers 220 modules for some of its multi band mobiles.

Yesu
 HTs FT-33R, VX-6R, VX-7R

Alinco
 HTs DJ-V27, DJ-280T, DJ-296T
 Mobiles DR-235T, (MKII, and MKIII)

ADI
 Mobile AR-247

Azden
 Mobiles PCS-4200, PCS6200

Drake
 Mobile/Base UV-3 (older but very cool) triband

For more information on the Forgotten band and equipment try this link: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1.25_meters

The Annual
BARRA AUCTION
 is coming soon!

Monday, February 18, 2008

Ham Radio Gear • Computers • Parts
 And Much More!

ANYONE CAN BUY OR SELL
 Start digging out your goodies to sell!

Doors open at 6:45 PM
Auction begins at 7:30 PM

Repeater Quiz!

Sandy Halik, KC2LGK

Here's some repeater chatter from the 146.91/444.00 system... How many can you get right?

- 1: What kind of assignment is Ted, WA2HKS, frequently on?
- 2: How fast (or slow) does Dave, W2ZZA, drive to and from work?
- 3: What is Ron, N1MWR, infrequently doing?
- 4: What does Greg, K2GTM, want you to bring to Tech-Net?
- 5: Who is frequently Marine Mobile?
- 6: Where can you usually find Ted, WA2HKS, on Thursday morning?
- 7: _____ & _____ is not allowed on the Tech-Net.
- 8: How do you score "extra points" on the Tech-Net?
- 9: What are the "extra points" good for?

(Answers at the bottom of the page... no peeking!)



"Where's my presents?"



"Santa's really here? Where?"

Holiday Party Pix!

A few random candid shots from the December holiday party, courtesy of our own "Jimmy Olsen," Joe, N2ZDU.



"No, Peter, it's Fa la la la..."



"Hey, Kevin, you gonna share some of that?"



"OK, I call this meeting to order... who brought the 'N' Connectors?"



- Answers:
- 1: special
- 2: 30 MPH
- 3: half listening
- 4: a friend
- 5: Leigh (KC2VS)
- 6: McDonalds
- 7: badgering & belittling
- 8: check in on 220
- 9: a laugh

Buffalo Amateur Radio Repeater Ass'n

Post Office Box 507

N. Tonawanda, NY 14120-0507



FIRST CLASS MAIL

Calendar of Events

GENERAL MEETINGS

General meetings are held at St. Bartholomews Episcopal Church, Brighton and Fries Roads, Tonawanda, across from Kenmore East HS. Doors open at 7:00 pm for rag chew, business meeting at 7:30, with program following.

Monday, January 21, 2008 -- Annual Report of the Technical Committee to the membership.

Monday, February 18, 2008 -- Annual BARRA Auction. Turn electronic trash into treasure at our fun-filled event.

Monday, April 21, 2008 -- SKYWARN training with members of the National Weather Service.



**NO GENERAL MEETINGS IN MARCH,
MAY, AUGUST OR NOVEMBER**
The *Link* is not published in those months.

BOARD MEETINGS

Board Meetings are held the second Monday of every month at the **Athens Family Restaurant**, 2801 Harlem Rd, Cheektowaga, between Genesee Street and George Urban Blvd. The meetings begin at 7:30 PM and **members are always welcome** to sit in on a meeting or bring concerns to the board.

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

The Technical Committee has formal meetings the first Friday of every month at 7:00 PM in Room 117 of the BOCES Potter Road Career and Technical Center, 705 Potter Road, West Seneca (Corner of Slade, Potter and Orchard Park Rds). Come on out to BARRA's own CCITT (Coffee & Crumpets Interrupted by Technical Talk), where progress of current projects is evaluated and new projects are planned. The meetings usually conclude with munchies at a nearby restaurant.

The **BARRA** Auction is next month!
Dig out those unused electronic items
that can be turned into **cash** at the Auction.
Save the date:
Monday, February 18, 2008!!